

Assistant Director for Business and Fiscal Resources Planning Session
August 2004

Introduction: Over the summer, Larry Benna, Assistant Director (AD), Business and Fiscal Resources (WO-800), interviewed the Bureau of Land Management (BLM) State Directors (SD), Associate State Directors, Deputy State Directors for Support Services, and Budget Officers (BO) to gain some insight on the service being provided by the WO-800 Directorate (the WO-800 Directorate includes the Management Systems Group, WO-830; Property and Acquisition and Headquarters Services Group, WO-850; Budget Group, WO-880; and the National Business Center (NBC)) and identify the Field's future priorities for the WO-800 Directorate. The information provided will assist the WO-800 Directorate's Management Team (MT) and key staff in setting a course for the next 3 to 5 years.

The States saw several areas where the WO-800 Directorate could provide better support and services. These fit into the following categories where actions will be taken for improvement.

- (1) Formal and Informal Communications: The WO-800 Directorate needs to increase formal communications through the Directives process. This was requested in the following functions/programs:

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| -- Building fund | -- e-Authentication |
| -- Smartcards | -- Service First |
| -- Grants | -- General Management Evaluations (GME) |
| -- Organizational changes | and program evaluations |
| -- Customer research | -- Contracting process for Land Use |
| -- Space management | Plans (LUP) |
| -- Reprogramming | -- Building moves |

Related to this, the WO-800 Directorate needs to increase the use of other communication methods to ensure that the Field understands and has sufficient training and information to implement BLM policies. This could be done by updating the WO-800 Directorate's website, distributing notes from staff meetings, and holding regular calls with counterparts like the BOs' call. Training aids could include desk guides and handbooks for areas such as the results from the Chief Financial Officer's (CFO) audit, contracting and financial procedures, cost management, etc. The WO-800 Directorate should communicate best practices and successes more and benchmark best practices.

- (2) Improve Coordination: The WO-800 Directorate needs to avoid duplication and overlap of efforts within the directorate and across other directorates (WO-200, WO-300, WO-500, and Fire) and coordinate any efforts to issue Instruction Memorandums (IM) and other policies that impact and influence other directorates. The WO-800 Directorate needs to coordinate deadlines so that they are not overlapping. For significant policy changes or data calls, the WO-800 Directorate needs to involve the Field in determining impacts prior to initiating any sweeping changes.

- (3) Maintaining a Clear Strategy: The WO-800 Directorate needs to be strategic in its approach to managing the BLM's business management practices. The WO-800 Directorate should serve as an advocate for the BLM with the Department of the Interior (DOI), the Office of Management and Budget (OMB), and Congress. The WO-800 Directorate needs to focus on coordinating such efforts across the directorates to get more resources for the States.
- (4) Clarify Roles and Responsibilities: The WO-800 Directorate needs to clarify roles and responsibilities in several of its functions to ensure that the Field understands where to go for information and assistance.
- Need to clarify the roles of the WO and the NBC in areas of space management, contracting, and procurement; and
 - To decrease confusion over who does what, publicize the organizational structure and functional statements to outline responsibilities. This will help differentiate between the policy and operational roles between the WO and NBC.
- (5) Building Capacity: The WO-800 Directorate needs to build and maintain strong working relationships with the Field. A key component of this will be in workforce planning for the whole WO-800 function in the BLM. The next few years will hold tremendous changes with potential retirements in the Field and at the NBC and with the implementation of new systems, etc. To address this, the WO-800 Directorate needs to provide a better mentoring function for the business and administrative managers in the Field and seek opportunities for exchanging skills and abilities.

With this information and the draft GME report, the WO-800 Directorate held an off-site meeting to develop a plan for addressing the concerns of the Field and the recommendations in the GME report, as well as setting a long-term course for the directorate.

What happened at the off-site meeting? Over the 3-day off-site meeting, the AD-800 established his MT, which consists of the Deputy Assistant Director (DAD), Group Managers (GM) for WO-830, WO-850, and WO-880, the WO-based Deputy CFO, and the NBC Director. The MT and staff drafted a mission and vision statement, outlined several steps to clarify roles and responsibilities, made some plans for the next few years, and addressed the specific concerns from the SDs' feedback. This information is outlined here.

The MT drafted a mission and vision statement that was reviewed and supported by the employees:

WO-800 DIRECTORATE'S MISSION: Pursue excellence in business practices, improve accountability to our stakeholders, and deliver better service to our customers so that the BLM can sustain the health, diversity and productivity of the public lands.

WO-800 DIRECTORATE'S VISION: To be the governmentwide leader in developing and delivering efficient and effective business practices with a skilled, innovative, and diverse workforce to support the BLM's mission.

The off-site meeting participants prepared milestones, assigned responsible individuals, and developed timelines to address the SDs' ideas for improvement. These tasks will be included in the MT's and individual employee's performance appraisals to ensure accountability. A listing of key issues that was surfaced and will be addressed in the short-term follows:

Improving Formal and Informal Communications			
Issue	Milestone	Lead	Due Date
Smartcard	Issue an IM, Part 2, which focuses on Logical Access.	Bob Donelson - Responsibility for logical access transferred to the AD-500.	Completed.
	Issue separate guidance on funding and impact to the Field outlining the status and costs.	Andrew Goldsmith/ Bob Donelson	1/05
	Issue e-Forms guidance to the Field. This IM is in WO-500 for surname.	Andrew Goldsmith	11/05
	Brief the Business Management Council (BMC) on conference calls. Link Smartcard website to WO-800 website.	Bob Donelson	Ongoing: Website link completed.
	The AD-800 will brief the Executive Leadership Team (ELT)/Field Committee (FC) for awareness and buy-in (including impact and costs).	Larry Benna	Next available ELT meeting.
Service First (SF)	Complete the SF marketing movie and on-line training and issue via an Information Bulletin (IB).	Andrew Goldsmith	11/04
	Obtain pilot authority for establishing a joint fuels treatment budget and workload planning for the Fiscal Year (FY) 2007 Budget.	Andrew Goldsmith/ Rob Collins	5/05
	Study and issue a report on the feasibility of cross delegation of acquisition authority.	Helen Curlee/ Forest Service (FS) counterpart	6/05
	Complete SF Assessment.	Kamilah Rasheed	10/04
	Implement recommendations from the SF Assessment.	Andrew Goldsmith and SF Steering Committee	3/05
	Build better liaison role so that guidance from BLM or FS is reviewed for impacts on the other agency.	Larry Benna (BLM)/Skip Underwood (FS)	Ongoing.
Organizational Changes	Outline organizational standards with the FC to improve consistency in organizational change policies and models.	Monique McDonald	11/04
	Revise BLM Organizational Manual Sections 1201, 1203, and 1211 to clarify established organizational standards and policies.	Monique McDonald	2/05

	Inform all offices regarding established standards and policies through the use of IBs, website, and a communications plan.	Monique McDonald	2/05
Evaluations	Issue IM on soliciting evaluation plans, outlining the evaluation program, and outlining the program evaluation project code for tracking costs.	Kamilah Rasheed	11/04
	Develop guidance and hold training on how to conduct the types of evaluations (i.e., Management Control Reviews and GMEs).	Kamilah Rasheed/ Dave McWhirter	6/05
	Clarify how evaluation costs (travel, training, and other related costs) are to be funded.	Larry Benna	12/04
	Develop priority setting process for evaluations and reviews.	Kamilah Rasheed	9/05
Customer Research	Define authorities and rationale for conducting customer research, explaining how we use the information.	Max Lockwood	12/04
	Reassess how customer research tools are funded.	FC	4/05
	Issue IB in the form of an End-of-Year Report, which will define priorities, trends, and themes and any necessary policy changes.	WO-830	12/04
	Convene meeting with ADs to discuss the Customer Research Program options.	Larry Benna	12/04
Procurement/ Grants	Train those who need to enter into partnership agreements on how to use the 1511 Assistance Agreements Manual Sections and Handbook, the "Guide to Agreements" and "Model Cooperative Agreements," located at http://web.blm.gov/natacq .	Brian Heath and the State and Center Procurement Analysts	2/05
	Educate and inform small businesses on how to use e-Commerce through information to all BLM business partners.	Barbara Gaines and the State and Center Procurement Analysts	3/05
Building Fund and Space	Distribute the 1530 Manual Section and H-1530 Handbook.	Marge Mascher	Completed.
	Provide materials and explanations on BMC/FC calls.	Bob Donelson	Ongoing.
	Issue IM on how Space Funding is allocated separate from the Annual Work Plan (AWP).	Bob Donelson	2/05
	Explain performance based budgeting of the space fund to FC/BMC.	WO-880 and Bob Donelson	6/05
Moves	Issue guidance on office moves and practices, including how to fund for systems furniture and other one-time purchases.	Mike Ferguson and Bob Donelson	4/05
Reprogramming	Define the rules and processes for reprogramming by specific appropriation and line-item authority in the AWP.	Steve Tryon	12/04
CCS/CCI	Request project submission for Challenge Cost Share (CCS)/Cooperative Conservation Initiative (CCI) 6 months earlier and seek greater flexibility for the use of the funds.	Steve Tryon	3/05

Improving Coordination			
Issue	Milestone	Lead	Due Date
Data Calls	Build a calendar of events, products, and data requests, across all directorates, including OMB and DOI data requests. Indicate who provides the requested data.	DAD-800	11/04
	Identify overlapping calls, existing data in systems, etc., to minimize the number of data calls.	DAD-800	12/04
	Put calendar in Planning Target Allocation and AWP.	Mike Ferguson	12/04
Field Coordination	Continue to review policy-changing IMs with the FC.	WO-800 Directorate	Ongoing.
	Request broad guidance from the Budget Strategy Team (BST) and operational guidance from the FC on the use of performance data in making budget allocations (spending on priority/non-priority program elements, etc.).	Mike Ferguson	12/04 BST meeting; 3/05 FC meeting.
	Clarify the roles and responsibilities of the WO-500 Directorate and WO-800 Directorate and communicate this information to the Field.	Larry Benna/ Ronnie Levine	11/04

Maintaining a Clear Strategy			
Issue	Milestone	Lead	Due Date
Prioritizing WO-800 Directorate's Work	Outline WO-800 Directorate's priority workload. Maintain strategic priorities and actions for tracking accountability. Provide employees and the Field with quarterly reports and rationale so that the WO-800 Directorate and the Field are clear on the progress.	WO-800 Directorate's MT	10/30 and ongoing monitoring.

Clarifying Roles and Responsibilities			
Issue	Milestone	Lead	Due Date
	Issue IM on roles and responsibilities within the WO-800 Directorate.	Larry Benna	11/04
	Make someone responsible for maintaining and updating the WO-800 Directorate's website with information showing who does what in regard to the Continuity of Operations Plan.	Stan Curtis	12/04

Build Working Relationships and Capacity			
Issue	Milestone	Lead	Due Date
Succession Planning	The WO-800 MT will develop a unified approach to workforce planning that incorporates key issues like succession planning.	WO-800 MT	11/04
Developmental Assignments	The MT will develop a strategy for bringing in Field staff and giving opportunities for staff in the WO-800 Directorate to participate in developmental assignments.	WO-800 MT	1/05
	Improve communications and morale across the WO-800 Directorate through quarterly all-employee meetings.	Larry Benna	Begin Nov/Dec 2004, then ongoing.
Conflict Management	The MT will identify opportunities to use conflict resolution and the Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) process to address challenges in the WO-800 Directorate.	WO-800 MT	1/05
Field Linkages	Identify and engage all Field staff who serve as contacts for all of the WO-800 Directorate's functions to improve their capacity and build better working relationships with the Field.	Larry Benna, WO GMs and NBC Director	2/05

Additional State-Identified Issues			
Issue	Explanation	Response	Contact
Alaska (AK): AK Conveyance Funding	Obtain consistency in funding for AK conveyances.	WO-880 is working with AK to address this issue.	Mike Ferguson
Alaska: Budget Structure	Concerns about more clarity between the National Landscape Conservation System and Public Lands maintenance programs being separate from operating funds.	A team is looking at potential budget structure revisions and will report to the BST.	Mike Ferguson
Alaska: Printing Rules	Obtain greater flexibility for LUP printing, given the length of time required for using Government Printing Office contractors.	Issuing updated guidance to give greater flexibility.	NBC
Arizona: Procurement	Consider sharing procurement and contracting between Arizona and New Mexico and increasing their thresholds.	A response was provided in a memorandum from the AD-800 in July 2004.	Larry Benna/ Helen Curlee

Arizona: Organizational Changes	Set a consistent approach and criteria for organizational changes, especially in light of the potential 3-tier transition.	WO-830 worked with the Director and Deputy Director to outline consistent approach and will distribute guidance for FC review.	Monique McDonald
California, Colorado, Eastern States, New Mexico, Oregon, Utah: FBMS	Complete and distribute the Financial Business Management System (FBMS) training strategy and schedule as soon as possible. Increase communications.	The NBC is developing a communications strategy and a training strategy and will issue by 2/05. Communications will be increased.	Julie O'Neill
California: Competitive Sourcing (CS)	Be more proactive and educate/communicate all aspects of the program. Ensure that BLM maintains a resident core in mission functions.	We will continue to provide information and training through the CS website, CS newsletter, Deputy Director updates, and regular briefings with the ELT, FC, and BMC. Protecting our core mission is a primary objective in our approach to selecting CS study areas.	Joe Federline/ Janine Velasco
California: Budget Strategy	Need to develop a more compelling and effective strategy to get more resources.	We are engaging the BST to develop a budget strategy for the future. WO-880 will work to develop a more compelling justification in budget requests.	Mike Ferguson
Nevada: SF	Pursue cross-delegation authorities in as many administrative areas as possible.	WO-850 is working on cross-delegations for procurement and other functions.	Andrew Goldsmith/ Helen Curlee
Nevada: Grants and Agreements	Need high quality agreement staff and additional support and guidance on grants and agreements.	WO-850 provides support and training for State grants/agreements staff.	Marc Gress
Utah: Evaluations	The WO-800 Directorate should set priorities for what States should consider in their internal evaluations.	The WO-800 Directorate works with Headquarters programs to outline evaluation plans, but does not dictate what States should evaluate. The AWP includes all planned evaluations.	Kamilah Rasheed
Colorado: FC Review of WO- 800 Directorate Guidance	Ensure adequate time for FC to review guidance and consider having DAD-800 distribute directly to FC.	Process for distributing WO-800 Directorate guidance will be addressed in a roles and responsibilities IM.	MT

Colorado: Budget	Develop a web-based table for budget changes to get information to the Field faster.	The WO-880 Group is establishing timelines for website updates and will also build upon the 3 rd quarter responses.	Chris Gordon
Oregon/ Washington: Fire Funding	Identify mechanism for restoring funds from fire transfers.	Budget will work up; DOI is streamlining the process.	Mike Ferguson
Oregon/ Washington and Montana: Reprogramming	Speed up the movement of small amounts of money for deferred maintenance and consider increasing the thresholds.	WO-880 will investigate options and work with the DOI and the Hill to improve the reprogramming process at all levels.	Mike Ferguson
Montana: Debts	More guidance on debt collection (employee over-payments, collections, etc.)	NBC will reissue existing guidance on debt collection procedures.	Jeannette Davis-Callahan
Montana: CS	Consider having a BLM manager lead the CS process.	The CS process includes a Steering Committee (BLM managers are committee members) that works closely with the FC on recommending functions to be studied. More information will be shared on the process, recommendations, and decisions.	Janine Velasco/ Joe Federline
Idaho: Evaluations and Best Practices	Increase the focus on program evaluations and implementing the best practices program.	The WO-800 Directorate's GME identified the need to focus more on program evaluations. The WO-800 Directorate is working toward providing increased services. The WO-800 Directorate will issue an IB calling for best practices from the Field.	WO-830
Eastern States: Budget	Bring back a version of the gray book and develop more on-line training on correct coding that is coordinated between WO-880 and the programs.	WO-880 will begin development of a fund coding handbook based on the new program elements.	Mike Ferguson